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AT THE HOME DEMONSTRATION MEETING

A radio discussion between Martha E. Manahan, home demonstration agent, Howard County, Maryland, and Mrs. Howard Brown, Woodstock, Md., delivered Wednesday, February 5, 1936, in the National Farm and Home Hour, broadcast by NBC and a network of 50 associated radio stations.

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GAPEN:

Next, we present a report on the seasonal activities of the home demonstration club members in Howard County, Md. Our reporters are a club member, Mrs. Howard Brown, of Woodstock, and Miss Martha E. Manahan, home demonstration agent for Howard County. Miss Manahan, what is the subject of discussion at most of your home demonstration club meetings just now?

MISS MANAHAN:

Why, Mr. Gapen, I should say that we are spending most of our time on the clothing project, just now. Wouldn't you say so, Mrs. Brown?

MRS. BROWN:

We certainly are in our own club, Miss Manahan. Of course at other seasons of the year we take up other projects.

MANAHAN:

All the clubs do. Things like the canning budget for the farm home, or school lunches, or the "save a chair clinic."

BROWN:

Maybe that will be new to the women in some places, Miss Manahan. If it is, and if they take up such a project, I think they'll find it worthwhile.

MANAHAN:

I should say so. In our "Save a Chair" clinic we gave demonstrations that taught club members how to restore and refinish more than a hundred pieces of furniture that they would otherwise have discarded.

BROWN:

It brightened up our homes, and without costing us much cash. Of course we put time and work into it. But now, Miss Manahan, let's talk about the things we're studying at the group meetings just now ----- let's talk about the clothing project.

MANAHAN:

Very well, Mrs. Brown. That's really what we're here for, I guess. I may say to our listeners that we feel a little bit of pride and we hope it's justified in our clothing project in Maryland home demonstration work.

(over)

BROWN:

The Maryland club members will testify that the pride of the extension service is justified, Miss Manahan.

MANAHAN:

If that's so it's because of the splendid way the club members have taken hold of the thing.

GAPEN:

This mutual admiration society is very pleasant, Mrs. Brown, and Miss Manahan, but let's get along with the story, if you'll excuse my hurrying you along.

MANAHAN:

Not at all, Mr. Gapen, not at all. But I simply had to stand up and testify about the way the Maryland home demonstration club members take hold of a thing after we extension workers give them the facts to work with. But I guess that's true in all States.

Now getting on with our story. Our clothing project is no different from the clothing projects in other States in most of the information about how to sew and repair and so on. Where we may differ from the home demonstration clubs in other States is in putting so much emphasis upon keeping records of clothing expenses for the family.

BROWN:

Let me interrupt, Miss Manahan, to give my endorsement of that plan. All of us in my club who have tried it certainly like it. We find it interesting to compare the amounts of money we spend for clothing for different members of the family. But the thing we find most interesting and most valuable is the business of deciding which pieces of clothing we bought or made during the year gave us the most return for our money.....

MANAHAN:

Which buys in finished clothing or materials were successes and which were failures.....

BROWN:

That's it. I think just about the most interesting club meeting of the year is that Fall one where we compare those records. We each make some confessions about our failures in the way of clothing economy. And we brag a little bit -- in a very ladylike way -- about our successes.

MANAHAN:

You're entitled to, Mrs. Brown.

Now, Mrs. Brown, will you tell us how you follow the outline of the general clothing project in managing the year's buying and making of clothes for your family.

BROWN:

I follow that outline pretty closely, Miss Manahan, as you know. The first thing is to keep a record of the money spent for clothes during the year.

Then when you sit down to plan the coming year's clothing for the family, you know about what it's going to cost.

MANAHAN:

But in the planning itself how do you work things?

BROWN:

Well, we go over the clothing on hand. Some of it is ready for wear as is. Some of it needs some freshening. Some needs remodeling. Some has been outgrown, and is to be given away.

After going over what's on hand, we can see what we need to buy to complete the family wardrobe for the season. That is, what we'd like to buy. But we have to put the cost of that up against the amount our family budget allows for clothing. Maybe our clothing ideas have been too hifalutin, and we have to cut out some items.

MANAHAN:

But finally you get your plan in line with the family income and the budget generally. Then what?

BROWN:

Then we follow the plan in buying clothing. That's about all on the planning side. Of course, there's a lot more to our club study than planning. There's all the pointers on how to buy -- how to choose for the sort of wear you are going to give a garment, how to save by making sure that each purchase fits in color and design with the clothes on hand, and so on.

MANAHAN:

And of course you learn how to make dresses and coats, for yourselves and your children -- in fact, you actually do make them at your meetings.

I suppose that sort of thing is rather familiar to most of our listeners who belong to home demonstration clubs. Those pointers are pretty much the same from State to State in the home demonstration work. They are all based on the same sound principles of clothing economy, usefulness and beauty.

I see Mr. Gapen is fidgeting about the time, so Mrs. Brown and I had better sign off. For both of us, let me say that we appreciate the opportunity of coming into your homes today for a brief visit. When other home demonstration club members are up our way in Howard County, Maryland, we hope they'll drop in at the county extension office. Good bye.

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